

## What is Claimed:

1                   1.     In a computer network including a client computer and a central  
2 computer, a method of receiving an order of a laboratory test of a biological specimen  
3 for a patient comprising the steps of:

4                   (a)    facilitating a connection between the client computer and the  
5 central computer;

6                   (b)    receiving at the central computer a laboratory test request from the  
7 client computer and patient, billing, and diagnosis information corresponding to the  
8 requested laboratory test; and

9                   (c)    transmitting to the client computer information for generating a test  
10 requisition and a label for use with the biological specimen.

1                   2.     The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of verifying at  
2 the central computer that the requested laboratory test is payable by a responsible party  
3 identified in the billing information for the identified diagnosis.

1                   3.     The method of claim 2, said receiving step comprising receiving a  
2 diagnosis code and a laboratory test code, said verifying step comprising searching a  
3 code database for correspondence between the diagnosis code and the laboratory test  
4 code.

1                   4.     The method of claim 2, said verifying step comprising determining  
2 for the identified diagnosis and the requested laboratory test whether a maximum  
3 number of tests has been exceeded for the identified diagnosis.

1                   5.     The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of transmitting  
2 a notification to the client computer if the requested laboratory test is not payable by the  
3 identified responsible party for the identified diagnosis.

1           6.     The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of requesting a  
2     payment guarantee from the client in response to the notification.

1           7.     The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of transmitting  
2     a request for additional diagnosis information to the client computer if the requested  
3     laboratory test is not payable by the identified responsible party for the identified  
4     diagnosis.

1           8.     The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of transmitting  
2     a request for additional information if ask-at-order-entry questions are required for the  
3     requested laboratory test.

1           9.     The method of claim 1, said receiving step comprising:

2               (a)     receiving a patient identification at the central computer from the  
3     client computer, thereby obtaining information about the patient for whom the test is  
4     being ordered;

5               (b)     receiving billing information at the central computer from the client  
6     computer, thereby obtaining information about a party responsible for payment of the  
7     test being ordered for the identified patient; and

8               (c)     receiving a patient diagnosis at the central computer from the client  
9     computer, thereby obtaining at least one diagnosis for the identified patient.

1           10.    In a computer network including a client computer and a central  
2     computer, a method of ordering a laboratory test of a biological specimen for a patient  
3     comprising the steps of:

4               (a)     facilitating a connection between the client computer and the  
5     central computer;

6               (b)     transmitting to the central computer a laboratory test request from

7 the client computer and patient, billing, and diagnosis information corresponding to the  
8 requested laboratory test; and

9 (c) receiving from the central computer information for generating a  
10 test requisition and a label for use with the biological specimen.

1 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of receiving a  
2 notification from the central computer if the requested laboratory test is not payable by a  
3 responsible party identified in the billing information for the identified diagnosis.

1 12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of  
2 guaranteeing payment by the client in response to the notification.

1 13. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of transmitting  
2 additional diagnosis information to the central computer if the requested laboratory test  
3 is not payable by the identified responsible party for the identified diagnosis.

1 14. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of transmitting  
2 additional information to the central computer if ask-at-order-entry questions are  
3 required for the requested laboratory test.

1 15. The method of claim 10, said transmitting step comprising  
2 selecting a laboratory test code corresponding to the requested laboratory test from a  
3 menu of laboratory test codes.

1 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of customizing  
2 the menu of laboratory test codes to include laboratory test codes commonly used by the  
3 client.

1 17. The method of claim 10, said transmitting step comprising  
2 selecting a diagnosis code corresponding to the identified diagnosis from a menu of  
3 diagnosis codes.

1 18. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of customizing  
2 the menu of diagnosis codes to include diagnosis codes commonly used by the client.

1 19. The method of claim 10, said transmitting step comprising:

2 (a) transmitting a patient identification from the central computer to  
3 the client computer, thereby providing information about the patient for whom the test is  
4 being ordered;

5 (b) transmitting billing information from the central computer to the  
6 client computer, thereby providing information about a party responsible for payment of  
7 the test being ordered for the identified patient; and

8 (c) transmitting a patient diagnosis from the central computer to the  
9 client computer, thereby providing at least one diagnosis for the identified patient.

1 20. In a computer network including a client computer and a central  
2 computer, a method of providing results of a laboratory test of a biological specimen for  
3 patients comprising the steps of:

4 (a) facilitating a connection between the client computer and the  
5 central computer;

6 (b) receiving at the central computer laboratory test results;

7 (c) receiving at the central computer a request from the client  
8 computer for laboratory test results and an identification of a patient or group of  
9 patients; and

10 (d) transmitting to the client computer the laboratory test results.

1 21. The method of claim 20, said receiving step comprising receiving  
2 an identification of a group of patients based on one of patient sex, a laboratory test, a

time period, patient age, and combinations thereof.

22. The method of claim 20, said transmitting step comprising transmitting a cumulative report of laboratory test results for a patient, said receiving step comprising receiving an identification of a patient and a number of reports to be transmitted in the cumulative report.

23. In a computer network including a client computer and a central computer, a method of obtaining results of a laboratory test of a biological specimen for patients comprising the steps of:

(a) facilitating a connection between the client computer and the central computer;

(b) transmitting to the central computer a request from the client computer for laboratory test results and an identification of a patient or group of patients; and

(d) receiving from the central computer the laboratory test results.

24. The method of claim 23, said transmitting step comprising transmitting an identification of a group of patients based on one of patient sex, a laboratory test, a time period, patient age, and combinations thereof.

25. The method of claim 23, said receiving step comprising receiving a cumulative report of laboratory test results for a patient, said transmitting step comprising transmitting an identification of a patient and a number of reports to be received in the cumulative report.